

Message Text

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SUBJECT: BACKGROUND ON ROYAL FAMILY FOR USE DURING QUEEN'S VISIT

1. THE DANISH MONARCHY IS THE OLDEST DYNASTY IN EUROPE TRACING ITS LINE BACK TO ABOUT A.D. 1000. QUEEN MARGRETHE WAS BORN APRIL 16, 1940, THE ELDEST OF THREE DAUGHTERS BORN TO KING FREDERIK IX AND HIS SWEDISH-BORN WIFE, QUEEN INGRID. A 1953 AMENDMENT TO THE DANISH CONSTITUTION ASSURED THE POSSIBILITY OF FEMALE SUCCESSION. ON THE DEATH OF HER FATHER, MARGRETHE ASCENDED TO THE THRONE ON JANUARY 14, 1972. ON JUNE 10, 1967, SHE MARRIED FRENCH DIPLOMAT COUNT HENRI DE LABORDE DE MONPEZAT, WHO WAS ELEVATED TO THE TITLE, "PRINCE OF DENMARK". THEY HAVE TWO CHILDREN: FREDERIK BORN MAY 26, 1968 AND JOACHIM BORN JUNE 6, 1969. THE TWO CHILDREN WILL JOIN THEIR PARENTS ON MAY 24 IN SAN JUAN ON BOARD THE ROYAL YACHT SO THAT THE FAMILY CAN CELEBRATE CROWN PRINCE FREDERIK'S BIRTHDAY TOGETHER. SINCE THE ROYAL CASTLES ARE GREAT TOURIST ATTRACTIONS IN DENMARK AND ARE A GOOD SUBJECT OF CONVERSATION, IT MAY BE OF INTEREST TO NOTE THAT THE QUEEN HAS THREE CASTLES AT HER DISPOSAL: AMALIENBORG CASTLE, AN EARLY 18TH CENTURY CONSTRUCTION IN DOWNTOWN COPENHAGEN WHERE THE GUARD-CHANGING CERMONY IS OF INTEREST TO TOURISTS; FREDENSBORG CASTLE, 30 MILES NORTH OF COPENHAGEN WHERE THE ROYAL

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COUPLE SPEND THE SUMMER; AND MARSELISBORG CASTLE IN

JUTLAND NEAR AARHUS, THEY SECOND LARGEST CITY IN DENMARK.

2. THE QUEEN'S PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION WAS COMPLETED IN DENMARK IN A MANNER DIFFERING VERY LITTLE FROM THAT OF OTHER DANISH CHILDREN. IN 1960, SHE ENTERED CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY IN ENGLAND, WHERE SHE STUDIED INTERNATIONAL LAW, POLITICAL SCIENCE AND ARCHEOLOGY, THE LATTER BEING A SPECIAL INTEREST THAT SHE INHERITED FROM HER GRANDFATHER, THE LATE KING GUSTAV OF SWEDEN. AFTER HER RETURN TO DENMARK, SHE ENROLLED IN THE WOMEN'S AUXILIARY AIR FORCE AND COMPLETED THE STANDARD TRAINING COURSE OF THE CORPS. LIKE HER LATE FATHER AND HER HUSBAND, THE QUEEN IS AN EXCELLENT SAILOR. SHE ALSO IS A GOOD SKIER. SHE PLAYS BRIDGE AND BACKGAMMON AND LIKES TO DANCE.

3. QUEEN MARGRETHE HAS TRAVELED WIDELY, BOTH PRIVATELY AND OFFICIALLY. BESIDES MOST OF THE COUNTRIES OF EUROPE, SHE HAS VISITED LATIN AMERICA, THE FAR EAST AND THE U.S. THE LATTER WAS A BRIEF VISIT TO CALIFORNIA IN JUNE OF 1960, WHERE SHE, IN THE COMPANY OF A NORWEGIAN AND A SWEDISH PRINCESS, PARTICIPATED IN THE INAUGURATION OF A NEW SAS AIR SERVICE. HER LAST OFFICIAL VISIT WAS TO THE SOVIET UNION IN THE SUMMER OF 1975, AND SHE IS SCHEDULED TO VISIT YUGOSLAVIA IN THE FALL OF THIS YEAR.

4. THE QUEEN IS UNUSUALLY TALL (ABOUT SIX FEET), WELL-PORPORTIONED, AND EXCEPT FOR A MINOR SKIN PROBLEM, CAN BE CONSIDERED RATHER GOOD LOOKING. SHE IS NATURALLY GRACIOUS AND INTELLECTUALLY CURIOUS. PERHAPS BECAUSE SHE IS STILL NEW IN HER ROLE AS MONARCH, SHE CAN SOMETIMES DISPLAY A CERTAIN SHYNESS AND NERVOUSNESS BEFORE THE PUBLIC. WHEN AT EAST, SHE HAS A GOOD SENSE OF HUMOR AND A QUICK REPLY, BUT SHE IS ALSO REPUTED NOT TO SUFFER FOOLS GLADLY.

5. QUEEN MARGRETHE IS QUADRILINGUAL IN ENGLISH, FRENCH, DANISH AND SWEDISH AND SPEAKS SOME GERMAN. SHE LIKES TO TALK ABOUT ARCHEOLOGY. SHE IS PRESENTLY READING CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN AUTHORS AND STUDYING THE AMERICAN POLITICAL AND SOCIAL SCENE IN PREPARATION FOR HER TRIP TO THE U.S. FOR THOSE WHO PLAN MENUS, IT MIGHT BE USEFUL

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TO KNOW THAT SHE IS NOT REPEAT NOT FOND OF SHRIMP COCKTAIL OR AVACODOES.

6. THE QUEEN HAS TWO YOUNGER SISTERS: PRINCESS BENE-DIKTE, MARRIED TO A GERMAN PRINCE AND ANNE-MARIE, MARRIED TO EX-KING CONSTANTINE OF GREECE. THE QUEEN IS ADDRESSED IN ENGLISH AS "YOUR MAJESTY" (CONTRARY TO SOME DIFFERENT PRACTICES ELSEWHERE). INTIMATES CALL HER "DAISY".

7. PRINCE HENRIK WAS BORN ON JUNE 11, 1934, IN FRANCE. HE SPENT PART OF HIS CHILDHOOD IN NORTH VIETNAM, WHERE HIS FATHER OWNED A SMALL PLANTATION THAT WAS ABANDONED IN 1954, WHEN THE FAMILY RETURNED TO FRANCE. PRINCE HENRIK WAS A MEMBER OF THE FRENCH FOREIGN SERVICE UNTIL HIS MARRIAGE IN 1967. HE WAS STATIONED AT THE FRENCH EMBASSY IN LONDON AS A THIRD SECRETARY, WHEN HE MET HIS FUTURE WIFE IN THE HOME OF MUTUAL BRITISH FRIENDS. HIS PARENTS NOW RESIDE IN SOUTHWESTERN FRANCE. QUEEN MARGRETHE AND HE HAVE RECENTLY PURCHASED A HOME IN THAT AREA OF FRANCE TO BE NEAR THE PRINCE'S FAMILY DURING VACATIONS.

8. PRINCE HENRIK IS ACTIVE IN THE DANISH RED CROSS, AND IN THE DANISH CHAPTER OF THE WORLD WILDLIFE FOUNDATION. HE CARRIES AN HONORARY COMMISSION IN THE DANISH AIR FORCE, WHERE HE ALSO LEARNED TO FLY AN AIRPLANE. HE IS AN ACTIVE SPORTSMAN. HE SAILS HIS OWN BOAT IN LOCAL RACES, IS A GOOD EQUESTRIAN, LIKES TO HUNT, AND PLAYS TENNIS. HE IS ALSO A GOOD BRIDGE PLAYER. HE IS ALLEGED TO BE FOND OF WEARING COLORFUL UNIFORMS.

9. IN ADDITION TO HIS NATIVE FRENCH, THE PRINCE SPEAKS GOOD ENGLISH AND IS MAKING AN EFFORT TO MASTER DANISH. AS A RESULT OF THE TIME SPENT IN VIETNAM AND AT THE SCHOOL FOR ORIENTAL LANGUAGES IN PARIS, HE KNOWS SOME VIETNAMESE. HE IS INTERESTED IN THAT PART OF THE WORLD AND WILL READILY ENGAGE IN CONVERSATION ABOUT INDOCHINA. HE TAKES AN ACTIVE INTEREST IN RAISING HIS TWO SONS (AGE 8 AND 7). HE IS A GOOD-LOOKING, FRIENDLY, RELAXED PERSON WHO HAS TRIED HARD OVER THE LAST 9 YEARS TO BE FULLY ACCEPTED BY THE DANES. HE IS ADDRESSED AS "YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS".

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